

REMARKS

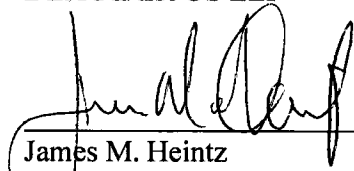
In response to the restriction requirement interposed by the examiner, applicants elect, with traverse, Group I, claims 1-7. Claim 1 has been amended, and new Claim 18 has been added. No new matter is introduced by this amendment and it is respectfully requested that this Preliminary Amendment be entered prior to initial examination on the merits.

Applicants hereby traverse the restriction requirement for the following reason. Applicants respectfully submit that there is no undue burden on the Examiner. Section 803 of The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure states that “[i]f the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.” Applicants submit that there is no undue burden in this case and therefore respectfully request examination of all currently pending claims.

In light of the above, Applicants submit that this application is now in condition for allowance and therefore request favorable consideration. If any issues remain which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants counsel, James M. Heintz at 202.861.4167.

Respectfully submitted,

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